

Colleton County Career Skills Center Training Funds – \$150,000

On behalf of Colleton County, you requested the 2020-21 Appropriation Budget the amount of \$150,000.00 for Colleton Career Skills Center. We would like to renew this request in the new budget. These funds will be used to improve the ability to assist job-seekers to find rewarding jobs and sustain employment through the vendor Palmetto Training Institute (PTI). PTI trains job-seekers in welding and machining and teaches other trades as well. At the end of training classes, the job-seekers receive a national certification that is recognized by employers anywhere in the United States. In addition, PTI goes a step further to help the graduates find employment. So far, they have demonstrated a 95% success rate. These funds are for a worthy cause that helps unemployed and under-employed citizens in Colleton County to obtain well-paying jobs.



July 7, 2020

The Honorable Margie Bright Matthews
Senator, District 45
State of South Carolina
502 Gressette Building
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Margie:

Thank you again for listening to my concerns about training funding for our underemployed citizens of Colleton County. The County is very interested in improving the ability of our jobs-seekers to find rewarding and sustaining employment in and around Colleton County. As you know, Colleton County has invested heavily to construct and equip a first-class training center, the Colleton Career Skills Center. Our training vendor, Palmetto Training Institute (PTI), trains jobs-seekers in welding and machining and can teach other trades as well. At the end of the training classes, the jobs-seeker has earned a national certification that is recognized by employers anywhere in the US. PTI goes a step further to help their graduates find employment. So far, they have demonstrated a 95% success rate.

A major barrier facing our citizens is that the training/tuition does cost approximately \$5000+/- . As you are well aware, far too many families average less than \$18,000 household income in a calendar year with median rent in excess of \$500.00 monthly. This cost precludes both the unemployed and under-employed from reaching their potential. Workforce Investment Board (WIA) funds can underwrite training costs for on-the-job-training candidates or dislocated workers. However, our unemployed and under-employed Colletonians cannot get these better paying jobs with benefits, without the skills that training provides.

To eliminate the tuition barrier to the life-changing opportunities that having a well-paying job means, we wish for you to consider helping our citizens with the establishment of a tuition grant fund pool. We believe that with funds of \$150,000, along with a promotional push to excite our unemployed and under-employed citizens, nationally certified training can be provided to approximately 30 Colletonians. We appreciate all that you have already done for Colleton County, and throughout your Senate District 45, and hope that you may be able to help us solve our skills training conundrum through a state budget appropriation.

Sincerely,

Phillip M. Taylor, Sr.
Vice-Chairman,
Colleton County Council